

posts, as there is no axle. Each wheel works on a gudgeon and independently of each other, the posts or standards being attached on the inner side to these racks, thereby supporting the load. The load when on the wagon will be about two feet from the ground. It requires two boxes, two hay racks or two wood racks when in operation, and, taking it all together, it is a comical looking structure. It looks something like two large carts fastened together. Mr. Drew expects soon to have this new vehicle complete, and hopes to derive a fortune from it.

Who can tell how his plans turned out?

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FIRST TOWNSHIP MEETING HELD IN INGHAM TOWNSHIP.

Story by William A. Dryer; Dansville in 1863; Dansville Village; recollections of D. L. Crossman; James Swan story; Clark family history; Benjamin Perkins Avery.

Wm. A. Dryer was born in **1813**, and came to Michigan with his family in **1836**. They came from Cazenovia, N. Y., to Buffalo by canal, then on the old steamer Michigan through the lakes to Detroit. He was for many years one of the best known citizens of Lansing, took a lively interest in all public affairs, and was especially keen in everything pertaining to agriculture.

He was for several years a member of the Board of Supervisors, and this is the story he told of the first township meeting held in the town of Ingham:

“This township at that time comprised what is now the townships of Ingham, White Oak, Leroy and Wheatfield. The meeting was held at the home of Caleb Carr in the spring of **1838**. There were about twenty-five men then living in Ingham Township who claimed the right to vote, and these represented half that number of states. Being scattered over so large a territory as the township then was, we were comparatively strangers to each other. We had been residents, -the most of us, from twelve to eighteen months, with civil organization.

“We felt the need of some proper authority to lay out roads, organize school districts, etc. The place to hold the meeting was designated in the act of Legislature organizing the township. The first question to be settled was what constituted a set of township officers. We had no records, no laws, nothing to guide us.

“Now commenced an interesting scene. The Massachusetts man said, ‘We want three select men,’ and the Vermont man declared such and such officers were necessary. The Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey men all advanced their ideas. Up

TOWNSHIP OFFICERS.

Daniel S. Crossman.
 Clerk-Marshall **Hawcraft**.
 Treasurer-Nelson A. Whipple.

TRADES AND PROFESSIONS.

Aseltine, H.-mason.
 Atwood, Marcus M.-lawyer.
 Barnes, **Chauncey**—carriage maker.
 Carson, S. B.-mason.
Castor, J. H., Rev.—Methodist.
 Cobb, **Daniel J.**--cabinet maker.
 Cobb, Thomas M.-cabinet maker.
Crossman and Atwood (Daniel L. Crossman and Martin Atwood)-flour mill.
 Crossman, Daniel L.-general store and postmaster.
 Dakin, Elisha-cooper.
Darkin, John B.-general store.
 Dean, Cyrus W.-harness maker.
 Demming, N. S. & W.-shoe makers.
 Etchells, Peter-general store.
 Fields, H. H.-cabinet maker.
 Fox, David D.-hotel.
 Francis, Joseph-shoe maker.
 Granger, H. D.-mason.
 Hann, Edgar---physician.
 Harris, B. S.--carpenter.
 Hatch, Ira-justice of the peace.
 Herald, James L.-blacksmith.
 Heald, William W.-carriage maker.
 Hendrick, S. P.--carpenter.
 Hicks, A. A. **P.**-blacksmith.
 Hoffman, Mrs. J.-milliner.
Jessup, C. & M.-saw mill.
 Keene, Joseph--carpenter.
Lebar, L.-carriage maker.
 Miller, Loren-justice of the peace.
 Needham, William-blacksmith.

Olds, Rev.-Universalist.
 Owens, Rev.-Methodist.
 Parks, Carleton-shoemaker.
 Parks, **S. V.**—carriage maker.
 Rice, Egbert-general store.
 Rice, Herman-blacksmith.
 Richards, -, cabinet maker.
 Sheldon, J. O.-lawyer.
 Sherwood, Jesse-shoemaker.
 Stewart, William A.-cooper.
 Strong, L. K.-carpenter.
Swarthout, Nathaniel-hotel,
Tibbits, Rev.—Baptist.
 Waldo, Charles-cooper.
 Webb, T. J.-physician.
 West, John-blacksmith.
 Weston, D. J.-physician.
 Weston, D. T.-boots and shoes.
 Whipple, George G.-carriage maker.
 White, Abel-livery stable.
Worden, Joseph-carpenter.

DANSVILLE.

In history Dansville is one of the earliest settlements in the county. Permanent home-seekers located there as early as 1836-40, and the first business establishment was a small store, with a general stock, opened by Samuel Crossman about 1847. The first hotel was the present "Union Hotel," now kept by Mr. Hurst. It was built in 1856-7 by David D. Fox.

A post office was established in the southern part of Ingham Township in 1846, and was first kept by John B. Lobdell. Later it was moved to Hayne's Corners, one and one-half mile south of the present village, and Henry Densmore was post master. It finally came to Dansville, where Daniel T. Weston was the first post master in 1855.

The original plat of the village was laid out May 26, 1857, by

Samuel Crossman and Ephraim Hillaird. D. L. Crossman and Dakin and Otis made additions and October 26, 1866, "Crossman's complete plat," embracing all others, was acknowledged.

March 9, 1867, the village was incorporated by act of the Legislature, and the first charter election was held May 6, 1867, at which the following officers were elected: President, Daniel L. Crossman; recorder, Marshall Hawcroft, he resigned and Z. Ransom was appointed; treasurer, L. K. Strong; trustees, H. L. Strong, M. V. Jessop and Joseph Keene. Churches, schools and fraternal organizations were quickly organized, and its growth only hampered by the lack of a railroad, but to off set this it has two stage lines run by G. P. Glynn and L. Geer, who carry trade between the village and Mason.

Many of its citizens have gone out into the world where they hold prominent positions and have written their names high on honor's roll.

DANSVILLE REMINISCENCES.

By D. L. CROSSMAN, 1889.

A part of a letter written in reply to an invitation to address the Masonic lodge in Dansville:

"Your kind invitation for me to address you on the evening of St. John's day, as a feature of the annual installation of the officers of your lodge, and I write mainly to thank you for the courtesy and for the compliment you pay me by such invitation.

"You can easily believe, when you recall that part of my history which relates to your locality, that the name of your lodge and your village is of peculiar interest to me. The poetry of age is to recall, and live over, anew, those events which happened in youth. I have gotten far enough along in the journey of life to appreciate the truth of this sentiment and to know now what I did not know then, viz.: that I saw my best days in the village of Dansville. That I lived my happiest years among her people and that the memory of the friends of those years will outlast all later friendships. My boyhood reaches back to the joys and struggles of the pioneers of that locality, and as I summon up the memories of

those early years and recall the names of those whose sturdy blows cleared the fields whose tillage you now enjoy, I realize that the greater part of those names are now on tombstones, beneath which their ashes rest to await the call of the angel of light in the morning.

"This brings to my mind the first grave in Dansville, that of a little girl about ten years old. The family, Robinson I think by name, had come from the State of Now York with my father, and a few weeks later the child sickened and died. Her remains found a temporary resting place on the knoll, where the sawmill yard is now situated, there being no cemetery site established. A short time after the body was exhumed to find a more fitting burial spot. All the scanty population of the place being present, the body was placed in state in a log building standing on the corner now occupied by Mr. Rice's store, general curiosity being such that the coffin was opened to give all a view of the dissolution which follows interment.

"In that log building was held the first town meeting ever held in Dansville. In fact the building was put up and intended for general use as a town house and a church; but it did not long serve in any capacity as it was lost by fire, the first building burned in Dansville. It was not much of a fire compared with what you have recently suffered, but I can assure you, the loss of the only public building in the vicinity was quite a loss, even though it was constructed of logs and not at all pretentious as to size or appearance,

"It was about 1846 when I commenced going to school at the Howard school house, there being no school district yet formed in Dansville. Well do I remember the road as it was in those days. The low ground just south of Mr. Bullen's was not yet causewayed, and pedestrians must wade in water, sometimes quite deep, or cross the pools on logs. I usually had company over the road. A girl two or three years older than myself was generally ready, with her dinner basket in hand, to join me as I passed her home in the morning. She lives in your midst now-a worthy woman, and I have no doubt she well remembers one wet morning when a barkless elm log, which was the only bridge over one of those pools of water, was too slippery for her feet and she fell in. I went the balance of the way alone that day, and when I went home at

night quite a complete wardrobe for a young lady about the size of my usual school companion, was still drying on the fence.

"A year later a careful examination of the new settlement revealed eight children of legal school age, and the Dansville district was formed. The first school meeting was held in Hale Granger's wagon shop, or what is now the McKnight lot, and the voters of the new district decided to start a school at once. True they had no house, nothing but a district and eight children; but pioneers were not held back by trifles.

"They did not wait for tax levies or contractors. They did not look for an architect with plans and specifications; but they invited every man to come to a bee and bring his axe. Two days of this combined labor and the temple of education was complete. District No. 8 was fully equipped to give instructions to its pupils and take rank with the other seven districts of the township. The seating capacity of the new edifice was ample, yet it can safely be said that the children's clothing would have lasted longer if the slabs of which the benches were made had been denuded of some of their surplus shakes and slivers. But in due time the boys' jack knives got in their work to advantage and the pupils could move about as uneasily as pupils usually do, with safety to body and limb and without unusual destruction of clothing.

"Among the first teachers employed to take charge of this model school house was a young lady of the district, whose people, just from western New York, had given her the advantages of eastern schools where discipline was somewhat in advance of the western idea. It was not strange therefore that she should find fault with some of the charcoal sketches with which I and my equally artistic seatmate, undertook to adorn the rough hewn logs of our temple, and when we persisted in our efforts to decorate the walls, she set us to shading each other's faces with the same coal pencils with which we had sought to beautify the room. I remember very well that the other pupils and the teacher seemed to enjoy the situation more than we did. This lady is still a prominent lady of your village and I presume never sees me without thinking of the ridiculous figure cut by her two pupils while undergoing this punishment.

"The same wagon shop before spoken of also served as a hall of justice for those primitive people, the jury sitting in line on the

workbench, while the justice of the peace occupied a splint chair 'in the corner. Law suits were not frequent, but when they did occur general interest was manifest, everybody being active on 'one side or the other of the case. I remember one case which involved an accounting between the parties. One item charged was the pasturing of a yoke of oxen over night, and a stuttering Witness was called to prove the value of the pasturage. He was very reluctant to set the figure, but when pressed by the attorney said, 'It's w-w-w-worth two and six a week, you've g-g-got your pencil and you can f-f-f-igure it up to suit yourself.' "

JAMES SWAN, AN INGHAM PIONEER.

Now In His 85th Year; Hale and Hearty, Had Many Interesting Experiences in the Early Days of This County.

From the Ingham County News of March 18, 1909.

A remarkable old man is James Swan, of Ingham Township, four miles east of here, who claims the proud distinction of having called off the first cotillion ever danced in Michigan west of Detroit. He celebrated his 84th birthday on the 27th of last October, but his snow white hair and slightly bowed shoulders are the only signs that age has laid on him. He can dance as nimble as any youth in the country, and on a brisk cold winter day not long ago he led his son-in-law, John A. Davidson, with whom he lives, a merry 'cross country chase on foot over twelve miles of rough country on a hunting expedition. And his hand has not lost its cunning with a fiddle. You have only to hear him play Money Musk, Speed the Plow, or Durang's Hornpipe, and call off the figures of the Scotch Reel, Lady Washington, or Sicilian Circles to realize what he and his violin must have been to the pioneer settlers in a time when musicians were as scarce as are now the bears and wolves which were then the nightly visitors of the clearings.

Mr. Swan first came to Michigan from Orleans county, N. Y., his birthplace, when he was 16 years old. He came by boat to

Detroit. and took **the Michigan** Central to Dexter, then the most important town in this part of the State. It was the only mill and market for Ingham county settlers, and he followed the **thirty-mile** ox trail through the woods to his brother John's clearing, close beside the farm which he himself now owns. Stretches of heavy timber alternated here with "oak openings," rolling sandy country, from which the underbrush was burned off by yearly fires, leaving the great oaks standing with long vistas visible between them, Our York State lad compared the openings to great orchards. The Indians fired the brush each year so that they could better hunt the deer and other game which hid in the thickets. As soon as the settlers fenced the land the underbrush sprang up quickly, and there were no more "oak openings."

Mr. Swan was here only six weeks this time, but performed a notable exploit. While **ploughing** for his brother one day he heard an unusual commotion on the other side of a long **windrow** of felled trees, and seizing some stones he climbed the **windrow**. A dog was holding a wounded **deer** by the haunch and he had heard its cry of distress. He struck the **deer** between the eyes with a stone, felling it to the ground, and after bleeding it **returned** to his work, expecting the dog's owner to appear and claim the game. No one came, and **after awhile** he found the dog crouched on a log in the **windrow** watching the dead deer. His sister-in-law, Mrs. Harriet Swan, of Mason, then a girl of 17, helped him dress the deer and she collaborates the story. When they cut off the deer's head the dog seized it and disappeared, and they never saw him again.

Mr. Swan and his brother Reuben returned to the home in New York that winter. They went on foot to Dexter and from there to Ypsilanti, following the Michigan Central. Here they stayed over night, and as they had plenty of gold bought a quantity of "wild-cat" paper money for considerably below par, as the railroad company had to accept it at its face value. The next morning at five o'clock they took the train, riding in a pelting snow storm on open flat cars loaded with flour. The engine frequently uncoupled and ran ahead to clear the snow off the track, and the two young men finally got off and walked to keep from freezing. The train passed them and refused to stop, though their passage was paid to Detroit, but they caught it on a siding and arrived in De-

troit at noon. **The old Commodore Perry** eventually came in and they sailed to Buffalo. The trip took two days and nights and they arrived just before the great storm broke, in which nearly every vessel on the lake went down. During this storm a colored sailor swam nine miles to shore with his captain on his back, and they were the only survivors from the men on their boat.

At Buffalo the Swan boys took an Erie canal packet. After going a ways some of the crew tapped one of the kegs of brandy in the cargo. First they knocked a hoop loose, then bored a hole in the stave under it, and after drawing out a kettle full of brandy plugged the hole and drove the hoop back. The driver left his team on the tow-path and came abroad to get his share, and while running forward to throw potatoes at his horses and keep them moving he stumbled and fell overboard. A deck hand ran to the rail with a pike pole. "Oh, Mike!" he called, "and can ye swim?" "Sure," sputtered Mike, "an' I dunno yit." Mike was hauled abroad, dripping, shivering and half strangled. "Let me **git to thot** brandy," he begged, as he hovered over the cook's fire, "I want the inside to be as wet as the outside."

Eleven years passed before Mr. Swan came to Michigan to stay. In **that** time he made another short visit here and also sailed one season off the Atlantic coast mackerel fishing. On March 4, 1852, he was married to Miss Ann Francisco at Knowlesville, Orleans county, N. Y. He still preserves the marriage certificate, written out on a small sheet of fancy note paper and reading as follows :

Orleans County, New York, Town of Ridgeway, ss.

I do certify that on the 4th day of March, **1852**, at the home of **D** James, in said town, James Swan and Ann Francisco were with their mutual consent lawfully joined together in matrimony, which was duly solemnized by me in the presence of Edward Bellows and Abigail Bellows, and I do further certify that I ascertained that they were of lawful age to contract the same.

Sands. Cole, J. P.

The witnesses did not sign the certificate. Mrs. Abigail Bellows, the bride's sister, is now living in Lansing as Mrs. Anson Loomis.

The harbor was full of ice when Mr. and Mrs. Swan left Buffalo one night early in May of that year on a boat which they after-

ward learned had been condemned. They had gone only seven miles when morning came and so many floats were broken from the paddle wheels that the vessel only dared stop once at Erie before running straight to Detroit. They bought their furniture in Jackson where they found brother John with an ox-cart waiting to take them to the new home in Ingham county. Most of the furniture had to be left behind, and when they had settled in the log house on John's farm and the first meal was on the table Mr. Swan sat on the churn and his wife on the bed. Soon, however, the rest of the furniture was brought from Jackson and in the fall they moved to the farm nearby, bought that summer of an insistent neighbor, where they lived together ever after until the death of Mrs. Swan. Mr. Swan still holds the old deed, dated August 2, 1852, and all his tax receipts. The tax that year on his 80 acres was \$2.11; six years later it reached the low figure of \$1.66. In 1860, on 116 acres, he was taxed \$7.25 as compared with \$5357 for 1908.

The house was a comfortable dwelling with walls of solid logs, hewn smooth on the inside, and with the chinks "mudded up" to make them wind and weather proof. The only sawed lumber in the whole building was used in the door and window casings and these boards were sawed by hand by whip-sawyers. The floors were made of split basswood, puncheons; the same puncheons, hollowed down the middle, were laid concave side up for a roof, and others with the hollowed side down were laid over the joints and the chinks were filled with moss. A great fireplace nearly filled one end of the living room, and at one end of this swung the iron crane on which the pots and kettles were hung and then suspended over the fire.

One night that fall Mr. Swan was asked to bring his fiddle to a dance at Hunt's tavern, two miles south of his farm. He went and then and there he says was danced the first cotillion ever called off in Michigan west of Detroit. He formed the young people on the floor and taught them cotillions, with their various figures and movements. "Country dances," which were never "called off," were all that had been known here, and the news went over the country that a man over in Ingham could fiddle cotillions and call them off. After that he and his fiddle were kept busy, and he played at dances far and near for three shillings and sixpence per

couple. Many were the notable gatherings where he played, but the one which he remembers best is the great ball at Squire Linderman's tavern in Mason, two blocks north of where the court house now stands. The big ball room was crowded, and as for refreshments, "Everything's all right," said the doorkeeper, "There's a bottle in the bed room and a hog in the house. Soon there was not room for the dancers on the ball room floor, and an overflow meeting was started in the dining room of the other tavern, just south of the present court house square. Another fiddler was secured, who could play country dances, and each couple, after dancing a cotillion in the big ball room, threaded their way up Main street in the dark, dodging the stumps and hollows, and sought the other tavern, where they stepped through the movements of the country dance until the arrival of more couples notified them that there was room on the floor at Squire Linderman's. The sun was shining in at the windows when the dance ended, and the dancers, many of whom had come 20 miles or more through the forest on horseback or in ox-carts, went home. Members of Mr. Swan's family played the organ, dulcimer, 'cello and other instruments, and with this orchestra he held dances at his home, besides playing all over the country for many years, but with the introduction of modern two-steps and waltzes he quit in disgust. He calls them "baby dances," and remains constant in his preference for the graceful figures and merry tunes of his younger days.

Mr. Swan tells interesting tales of hunting in the early days. While he was taking the honey from a bee tree he had cut in the forest back of his house one day a big buck came bounding past, and his dog caught the creature by the ear and dragged it down. It pushed the dog along on the ground, however, and Mr. Swan ran up with the ax to kill it before it should press the dog up against a tree or stump and impale him on its antlers. The dog lost its hold just as the man swung the ax, and the deer's great horns swept up by his face. As he struck at its head the dog dragged the deer down again, and the ax was buried so deeply in the creature's body behind the fore leg that the man could hardly pull it out. A second blow cut off one of the struggling animal's hind legs, and then Mr. Swan, forcing his knee between the deer's other limb and its body, so that it could not draw up and strike

him with the terrible sharp hind hoof, cut its throat. He was dressing it when the dog gave warning again, and looking up, he saw a drove of hogs coming at a brisk run. The settlers' hogs ran wild in the woods all summer. They were savage at any time, and these were especially so now that they had smelt the deer's blood. Seizing a heavy stick Mr. Swan stood ready, with the dog, to fight them off as long as possible, but after gazing at him a moment the leader, a huge boar, curled his tail, and with a whistling snort wheeled and trotted off into the woods, followed by the others. More bees came flying by while Mr. Swan was dressing the deer, and about that time Chief Johnny Okemos, a prominent character in Ingham county history, appeared on the scene, carrying a wild turkey over his shoulder, slung from his gun barrel. He "lined" the bees for Mr. Swan, and they soon found the bee tree and cut it, and there were five pails of clear honey and a deer to show for this day's work.

The settlers' sheep and other stock had to be yarded every night to keep them from the great timber wolves. Mr. Swan was coon hunting with a party one night when a wolf followed them in the underbrush. Their dog finally attacked the animal, and after a fierce battle the wolf broke away, leaving the dog badly lamed. One monstrous wolf, which had been killing sheep in the neighborhood, was finally poisoned and sent to a museum to be mounted. Bears were numerous but not dangerous, except to stock. Deer roamed the runways in the woods in herds like sheep, and were almost as easily killed. Wild turkeys were as numerous and as easy to shoot as sparrows are now.

Mr. Swan went cooning alone one night in the big swamp west of his farm. Reaching Dobie's lake, eight miles away, he rolled up in the bark of a tree and slept there until three in the morning, when he started home, hunting on his way. On reaching home he found that a fur buyer from Detroit had been waiting over night for him, and he sold that night's catch of coon and mink skins for \$21.

The Indians were always friendly, and used to trade huckleberries to the settlers for provisions. Mr. Swan often visited them and fiddled for them at their favorite camping ground, on a little stream three and a half miles east of Mason, where the Ingham county seat had been formerly located. Some of the younger white men and women went there one Sunday, and

although things were not very clean around camp, they could not refuse the maple sugar which the squaws gave them as a mark of hospitality. Dozens of muskrats were roasting on twigs stuck up around the great campfire. The wigwams had pole frames covered with bark, and a big buck strode in from a hunting trip and tossing a woodchuck and other game from his shoulder threw himself down in one of these houses. As he lay there on a bed of black ash bark, covered with deer skins, in full view of the visitors, they were highly amused to see several little blind woodchuck kittens come crawling out of his clothes.

Mr. Swan visited Lansing once in the early history of that town, and after paying fifty cents to be ferried across Cedar river on a raft found only two or three shanties on the present site of the Capital city. He was offered an eighty-acre timber lot, including the spot where the Capitol stands now, for \$800, but the land was too swampy to suit him. He would not lose such a chance again, however, he says, as he has noticed that cities in a new country always spring up along good water courses.

With his other activities, Mr. Swan practiced the trade of a collier. Many times he has piled all the timber from six or seven acres of woodland up in a great windrow 100 feet or more long, covered the whole with earth, and then fired it. Then he would watch it almost constantly, day and night, sometimes for six or seven weeks, covering the holes where the fire would break out, and as the burned logs shrank away, pounding down the earth over them to prevent air spaces. When it was thoroughly burned he would uncover the coal pit and roll out the great maple logs, as perfect as when they were first cut, and ringing like silver when they were broken up with the ax. This coal was the only fuel used by blacksmiths and tanners all over the country for years.

Mr. and Mrs. Swan went to Wyoming to visit their son Reuben in 1890, and the thing which impressed them most there was the enormous herds of elk which he saw in the mountains. He shot three deer from the wagon while taking a 75-mile trip to Snake River, the headquarters of Kit Carson in his hunting trips in that vicinity. Around Alkali creek, near by, he could see every morning a herd of 200 or more antelope and from three to five hundred deer when they came there to drink.

March 4, 1902, Mr. and Mrs. Swan celebrated their golden wed-

ding, Eighty-five friends and relatives were present, and it was a memorable occasion. Nearly three years later, on Jan. 31, 1905, Mrs. Swan died. Two thrifty wild cherry trees, which stood in the door yard and were trimmed and kept for shade trees when the home was first bought, had been cut and sawed into lumber a few years before, and from the lumber three coffins had been made, for Mr. Swan, his wife, and their daughter, Mrs. Ina Davidson. On Feb. 8 Mrs. Swan was buried in her coffin, and the other two are stored away in the old home. Since then Mr. Swan has lived with his daughter, Mrs. Davidson. She is very carefully preserving several phonograph records of violin selections by him, and also has one of an old-fashioned song which he sings, "To Make Me a Beautiful Boy." He knows a number of these quaint old ballads of Revolutionary vintage, each telling a complete tale in their many verses, set to tunes that have come down from Shakespeare's time. And, in fact, although he takes a lively interest in things of the present, Mr. Swan longs for the good old days that are past, for the music, the dancing, the wholesome privations and simple pleasures of pioneer days, when the settlers would go as far to church as they would to a dance. Four miles through the woods to hear a preacher was a short walk for them, and all the country for miles around went afoot to Teal's mill pond to see a baptism. They went to Sunday school at Hawley Corners, three miles away, and while the elders and young people were engaged with the lesson, the children were outside playing marbles with wild gooseberries. Neighbors were more neighborly then. On one night in the week every family in the community would yoke up the oxen and drive to Swan's to spend the evening. Next night another family would entertain. Wealth and poverty made no social distinctions, and we are the losers, he contends, for having exchanged the simplicity of pioneer life for the conveniences and luxuries of today.

ROY W. ADAMS.

FAMOUS BIBLE GIVEN TO DANSVILLE CHURCH.

Charles H. Crossman, of New York City, Makes Gift. Was Published in 1795 When George Washington Was President—Washington Owned Bible of Same Issue.

Charles H. Crossman, of New York City, has presented the Dansville Baptist church with a Bible with a history. The book, which was published in 1795 while George Washington was President of the United States, is one of a subscription edition, and the Father of His Country was one of those who subscribed.

The family who subscribed to this volume kept it in their possession for more than a century. It was then presented to Charles H. Crossman, a son of Samuel Crossman, who was the founder of the village of Dansville. Samuel Crossman was born in 1796 at Hillsdale, N. Y., of ancestry that came to America in 1639. He located at Dansville in 1836 and the village was named after his son, Daniel H. Crossman.

The historical book was presented to the Dansville Baptists in order that the church might become its custodian. This old and valuable book will be highly prized by the society, both for its historical value and the sentiments that prompted the gift.

E. S. CLARK FAMILY.

Andrew C. Clark, now of Lansing, contributes the following relative to his family history: Elias S. Clark, the father, was born May 3, 1814, and died in Ingham Township, Ingham county, Mich., June 30, 1894. The mother, Mary A. Clark, born August 30, 1817, died August 17, 1880.

By Andrew C. Clark.

A sketch of my early recollections of the pioneer life of our dear parents' hardships and deprivations as I can recollect them.

Our parents came into Ingham county, township of Ingham, in

the year 1840 and settled upon the northwest quarter of section 6, but did not remain there long as in April of the same year they moved to section 1, northeast quarter, and there in those early pioneer days of seventy-nine years ago in a then almost unbroken forest they commenced again anew to hew out the place that was to be and afterwards was the home where a family of nine children were reared. And so by extreme industry and the most strict economy they were able to fell the forest and hew out what is today one of the finest farms of Ingham county. But they have passed out. The people of those early days had so many inconveniences, you may quite safely say they had none but inconveniences as compared with the present day. At that time there were no stoves. Can you ladies of this generation conceive how you could cook for a large family without a stove. I think I hear the answer "no." I will call your attention to some of the hardships of a pioneer life. The nearest market at that time was Ann Arbor, a distance of 45 miles through the forest by blazed trail, and over roads many of them through the low marshy ground which today we would think impossible to travel over.

The roads were so bad it required two yoke of oxen to endure the fatigue and it took five days to make the round trip. Our mothers would clean the wool and card by hand and spin the rolls into yarn and weave and knit it into stockings and socks and weave into cloth all garments for the family, and this was done by the light of a tallow candle. But at this time girls did not wear pin-head heels and toothpick-toed shoes, nor did they wear peek-a-boo dresses, but time has changed since 1840. In those pioneer days many of our mothers corded and spun the rolls and wove or had them woven into cloth and made the dresses that the girls wore, and this without the aid of a dressmaker, and in the summer time if the girls perchance were fortunate enough to have a pink calico dress and sunbonnet to match they looked just as sweet to the boys as do the girls of 1919. And for shoes, all the girls went to the shoemaker and the measure of the foot was taken and the shoe made to fit the foot, not the foot made to fit the shoe. But here we will let the girls rest and I will return to some of the pioneer inconveniences of the pioneer life of my parents. An incident that may be of interest to the present generation of a pioneer life of what we would now call poverty, I well remember

of hearing my father tell of making a visit to one of the old pioneers upon the 4th of July which was about five miles distant with an ox team and wooden shod sled through the then almost unbroken forest by the aid of blazed trees as their guide. Perhaps there are some present that may know of the family of this pioneer. He was known in those days as Squire Atwood. He was the grandfather of Tip Atwood, of Tuscola county. He was the grandfather of Tip Atwood, of Tuscola county. And again I remember of hearing my father tell of one of his oxen being left out at large at night and drinking so much syrup that it acted as a cathartic to the extent that the ox was unable to get around and procure sustenance to sustain life. Father did not have either hog nor grain and setting out to see if some of his neighbors were not more fortunate than he went to a man by the name of Eben Crossman, then living as nearly all of the good people did in a log house and having a log barn told him the predicament he was in. Mr. Crossman says, "Now, Mr. Clark, I have just about as much hay in my barn as you could do up in that rope twice and come with me and I will share with you." This was about one and a half miles from home. My father took the hay upon his back and started homeward. This ox being one of his team. My father never forgot that great display of friendship and generosity. But such was the spirit of friendliness and generosity of those days. Friends, what would we of today think of our prospect for tilling the soil to procure a living for a large family with such a team as described above. In those pioneer days all stock were free commoners and people thought if their stock could live through until the 1st of April they could then procure their living, subsisting upon brakes and leeks and gleaning upon grass growing upon the low marshy land. Sometimes the cattle being thin in flesh would venture into the low marshy and springy places until being weak were unable to return and so were mired. In such case they were to be found and get neighbors with long ropes and remove them and often this was done by the light of a lantern with a tallow candle. But such were the hardships of an early pioneer's life. Again, one more hardship of those days. My father used to have to go to Milan to get all grinding done, a distance of 18 or 20 miles, and all this with an ox team. But he always performed those tasks cheerfully, looking for brighter days. And his expectations were not in vain. He was comfortably and nicely

situated long years before passing out. Now, trusting **this** may be of interest to some of you at least, I shall be repaid for my effort.

A. C. CLARK.

Lansing, Mich., April 13th, 1919.

Having thought perhaps a little sketch of the biography of my past life from my earliest recollections up to the present time might **be of** interest to the most of you, I will endeavor to narrate some of the incidents that I think will be of the most interest.

I was born upon section 6 of the township of Ingham county on February 23rd, 1843, and my people moved from there onto section 3 of the northeast quarter in the fore part of April of the same year, I being then about one and a half months old. I remained in this home continuously until I reached the age of twenty-one. **This** was practically a new county. There were bear, deer and fox as wild game, and I can remember the early settlers having to cover their hog pens with small logs to prevent the bear from carrying away their hogs, and of the hunters of the then wild forests belling and putting their hound dogs on their runways and the hunters standing still in hiding to shoot them as they came along. **I can** also well remember the inconvenience we were put to before matches were made. The pioneers were accustomed to building up their fire in the old **Dutchback** fireplaces and oftentimes the fire would not keep until morning and I have often had to go **to the** nearest neighbor with a shovel to get some coals if they were more fortunate than we were. Some people depended upon steel flint and punk in case of an emergency and sun glasses were used by some, but of course they were only successful when the sun shone brightly.

I can remember when hand sickles were used for reaping grain, but they were replaced by more modern tools before I reached the age of manhood. There were no machines for reaping grain or hay until I was about twenty years of age. One of my earliest recollections of the pioneer days was that of a man by the name of Hammond who was a shoemaker by trade who used to make all of our shoes and boots, and as my father was a blacksmith they ex-

changed with each other goods in their line. My senior brother had started to go for some work that we were promised. Cold weather was coming on and the mornings were getting pretty frosty. At that time the forest was only cleared about sixty rods **north of the house which at this time stands upon the same farm.** On his way my brother saw a large bear and the bear reared upon his hind legs and brother called the dog and spat his hands until the bear turned to go away and then he took leg bail for home. I suppose if ever a boy was frightened it was he. From this point the forest was unbroken for a distance of about two miles, being guided only by marked trees for the highway. I can remember seeing corpses drawn by oxen to the school house for the funeral ceremonies as there was not a church in the land. The dwellings consisted of only one room. The first stove I ever saw was brought in by a man by the name of Webster, who came through the country peddling them. He had two of them and my father traded him a yoke of oxen for the two, keeping one and selling the other one.

Another bit of my early recollections perhaps may be of interest to you. I have a very distinct recollection of the days when a teacher of the public schools was barred from a certificate if he was unable to make a writing pen from a goose quill and the scholars were supposed to roam the pastures where the geese were kept and gather the quills after being shed by the geese. Another little incident that occurred to me at the age of about five or six was connected with the first horse my father ever owned. This horse became the dam of a little colt, and my father not having sufficient land cleared for pasture he procured pasture for her in a field adjacent to the school house where I attended school, being one mile from our home. Being anxious to exhibit my father's little colt, it at that time being a very rare specimen of that race, I invited my little comrade to go with me to see it. Of course I was leading, and upon nearing old Sake, that being her name, came to protect her young knocking me down and otherwise bruising my back to such an extent that Mr. R. W. Whipple, seeing it, came running to my rescue and carried me into his house and administered the care I needed. Mr. Whipple was then living in a log house standing where the school house now stands

and is called the Whipple school house. This occurred probably when I was at the age of five or six years.

There is just one more little incident that occurred in my childhood days which I would like to make mention of. Back in the early fifties schools were supported by rate bill as was called, i. e., those sending scholars to school paid the teacher. There being a division in the district of opinion as regard to the teacher there were two teachers hired and taught in the same house for one day only. The scholars whose parents favored the one teacher took the side that the teacher occupied, but on the second day there was but one teacher for the entire school. And well do I recollect back in my early childhood days when the forests were only partially broken of meeting large processions of Indians as we were either going or returning from school with their herds of ponies with bells on them and the squaws with their papooses strapped upon their backs, some riding the ponies and some walking, and they always had several dogs, but they were always very civil. Once they camped in front of our house, which was a natural forest at that time. And now last, but not least, in my early school days our fathers always found something for a boy to do upon the farm at the age of seven or eight years. The teacher would cut a bundle of good tough whips and keep them on hand as the boys had disputes and would fight and the teacher would give each boy a whip and tell them to go to it. This was considerable amusement for the other boys looking on to see who would become the champion. But, thank fortune, we have advanced from such crude practice to a more enlightened age.

BENJAMIN PERKINS AVERY, PIONEER OF INGHAM COUNTY.

Benjamin Perkins Avery, the youngest son of Nathan and Aliff (Pearson) Avery, was born in Rutland, Vt., Jan. 26, 1799. His father, Nathan Avery, was a Revolutionary soldier, and after a few years residence in Vermont after the war settled in Palmyra, N. Y., when Benjamin was about seventeen years old, living in that vicinity until 1838 when he came with his family to Michigan.

He married Feb. 4, 1821, Elizabeth (Betsey) Brewer, whom tradition gives as a descendent of Anneke Jans.

The journey to Michigan was made by canal boat from Palmyra to Buffalo, and from there to Detroit by steamboat. Elias Avery writes of those early times: "The first I remember of my father he was working land on shares and two years before coming to Michigan got enough together to get that Far west and buy eighty acres of land and get home again. In the fall of 1838 we moved to Ingham county. We stopped in what is now called Meadsville.

"Old Esquire Caleb Carr lived there and kept the post office, and if one of our friends happened to write to us we could have the letter by paying twenty-five cents for it, which was the price of carrying a letter in those days.

"We secured a log school house with an old fashioned slick chimney and Dutch fireplace that smoked badly. This was about three miles from my father's land. He had just about enough money to get here with, and a large family on his hands in the woods, but father, Nathan and Christopher found wheat to thrash with flails for every eighth bushel and they pounded 0111 black ash splints and mother and the younger children made baskets and carried them to what neighbors we could find and sold them for venison or anything we could eat, and we had such appetites we only knew when we had enough when there was no more on the table. Yet, by diligence we got our living and in the spring rolled up a log house, covered it with shacks and used split basswood planks for a floor, for lumber could not yet be procured. For a chamber floor elm bark was peeled and spread down so the children could be stowed away overhead. I think about an acre of ground was cleared and planted. We stayed a year and traded places with Eaton, getting only fifty-nine acres, but of better quality and more improvements."

After moving to the Eaton place the family had more room as another log house was added to the one already standing giving double the accommodations they had been having.

The deer used to come out of the woods in winter and feed on the young wheat. "One night," Henry Avery said, "father went out, and resting his rifle on the corner of the house shot one of the pretty creatures." Other game was quite plentiful. He remembered of two black bears being killed at one time.

It was so far to mill the corn was ground in the top of a stump that had been hollowed out, Indian fashion. There were no roads through the woods from one settlement to the other, nor to the school. The way was found by trees which the surveyors had blazed. The children went to school when possible and probably prized their advantages more than the present generation who have so many facilities for learning.

One of the pioneer amusements of that early day was to take a boy, put him in a deer skin, toss him up and catch him.

Benjamin Perkins Avery was a man about five feet, seven or eight inches in height, and weighed about 140 pounds; he had blue eyes and light brown hair and was of a quiet and affectionate nature, temperate in his habits. In his old age he sometimes smoked but finally gave up the practice entirely. He was a Democrat, and although always interested never became active in political matters. The only offices he ever held were commissioner of highways and poor commissioner.

He was a member of the M. E. church from early life. A hospitable greeting was always accorded the visitor, and the Methodist preacher often came there for a "Welcome Home." from Deacon Avery. The training and example given his family of sons had good effect, for all, in mature life, were consistent church members.

For many years he served as class leader, until stricken with shaking palsy, about twenty years before his death. The condition of his health obliged him to give up work and he deeded his farm to his son **Elias**, who was to take care of him for the remainder of his life.

Elias, being by nature more of a mechanic than a farmer, sold the farm and moved into the village of Dansville. After the death of his mother in 1878, and later his wife, and business reverses, he found himself unable to care for his father; so for the two years which remained for this old pioneer to live he found a home with his other sons. Rheumatism and paralysis rendered him entirely helpless, yet the old man uncomplainingly bore his lot with Christian fortitude. He died May 31, 1883, at Dansville.

His wife was a woman of much force of character. She showed her Dutch origin very plainly in her appearance and by her thrifty ways. **Shewas** very ambitious and even after losing her sight in

her old age would knit and sew, even when she could make nothing but holders. She had her own loom and her spinning and weaving were quite notable.

We of this generation scarcely realize the methods of our grandmother's cooking, which was done at a fireplace, the kettle hanging from a hook or crane. Beans were cooked in an iron kettle that had a tight-fitting iron cover with a handle. The beans were parboiled, then pork was added and the kettle buried, with its contents, in the coals for hours.

The first ovens, made before bricks could be procured, were built after this fashion: A pile of wood was made very compact, the size and shape of the oven desired, and then plastered over with clay. The wood was burnt out and the clay was made by the action of the fire, as strong as and serviceable as brick. When baking was to be done a fire was built in it some time before it was wanted, then when thoroughly heated the coals were taken out and bread, pies, cakes and all sorts of good things were put in, those articles requiring least baking being placed in the front, where they could be taken out handily. When the tin ovens came into use they were considered a great invention. These set before the fireplace and were open on the side of the fire, the heat being reflected on the other by the cover.

William Avery remembers well the first stove they ever used. The top was circular, with a griddle in the center and four other holes around it. The top revolved, allowing the cook to bring each part of the top within easy reach. This article was second-hand and after a time was replaced with a Clinton air-tight stove with an elevated oven, the door of which dropped down. It cost \$30, which was paid in chopping. The same amount was paid for a clock, a few years later, and the brass works of this timepiece are still running.

(Written 1899 by Lillian Drake Avery, of Pontiac, for a Family Redord.)

posts, as there is no axle. Each wheel works on a gudgeon and independently of each other, the posts or standards being attached on the inner side to these racks, thereby supporting the load. The load when on the wagon will be about two feet from the ground. It requires two boxes, two hay racks or two wood racks when in operation, and, taking it all together, it is a comical looking structure. It looks something like two large carts fastened together. Mr. Drew expects soon to have this new vehicle complete, and hopes to derive a fortune from it.

Who can tell how his plans turned out?

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FIRST TOWNSHIP MEETING HELD IN INGHAM TOWNSHIP.

Story by William A. Dryer; Dansville in 1863; Dansville Village; recollections of D. L. Crossman; James Swan story; Clark family history; Benjamin Perkins Avery.

Wm. A. Dryer was born in 1813, and came to Michigan with his family in 1836. They came from Cazenovia, N. Y., to Buffalo by canal, then on the old steamer Michigan through the lakes to Detroit. He was for many years one of the best known citizens of Lansing, took a lively interest in all public affairs, and was especially keen in everything pertaining to agriculture.

He was for several years a member of the Board of Supervisors, and this is the story he told of the first township meeting held in the town of Ingham:

"This township at that time comprised what is now the townships of Ingham, White Oak, Leroy and Wheatfield. The meeting was held at the home of Caleb Carr in the spring of 1838. There were about twenty-five men then living in Ingham Township who claimed the right to vote, and these represented half that number of states. Being scattered over so large a territory as the township then was, we were comparatively strangers to each other. We had been residents, the most of us, from twelve to eighteen months, with civil organization.

"We felt the need of some proper authority to lay out roads, organize school districts, etc. The place to hold the meeting was designated in the act of Legislature organizing the township. The first question to be settled was what constituted a set of township officers. We had no records, no laws, nothing to guide us.

"Now commenced an interesting scene. The Massachusetts man said, 'We want three select men,' and, the Vermont man declared such and such officers were necessary. The Pennsylvania, New York and New Jersey men all advanced their ideas. Up

comes the Buckeye, who insists that the county treasurer takes the assessment, and so on until arguments had been brought from all the men representing different states.

"The discussion had now become very exciting and somewhat personal. The township of Stockbridge had been organized the year before. Ingham county was not yet organized, so Stockbridge was attached to Jackson county for all judicial purposes.

"I had the pleasure of being acquainted with P. Lowe, Esq., afterward of Mason, but then a resident of Stockbridge and holding an office in that township. I had learned from him what officers were necessary for a township organization in Michigan. They were presented to the meeting, and having urged the correctness of the authority amid a pandemonium of excitement, a compromise was finally effected.

"We agreed to elect men to the same offices that were held in Stockbridge, and we now came to the question of who should be the honored ones. Having had very little intercourse with each other, we knew still less of each other's ability or qualifications. The discussion, as may be imagined, became quite personal. It was a delicate question for one man to ask another how much he knew, and for the questioned man, having the prosperity and welfare of the newly organized township at heart, to say that he was capable of discharging the duties that he knew nothing about, without example, precept or law to guide him, was most assuredly a delicate matter,

"It will be understood of course that we knew no politics. The subject was not mentioned. It was the earnest desire of each and every man to use the very best material in our possession, and to run the ship of state so that she might be launched safely and successfully. That we might bring order out of chaos and inaugurate a system of organization in the wilds and wilderness, such questions of course were indirectly asked, but there was an effort made to learn something of each other's qualifications.

"About three o'clock we had agreed on a ticket. Now came the interesting question of who shall receive the votes, and who shall have the authority to declare the election and administer the oath of office? These were questions that no one could answer. Several suggestions were made representative of the different states, but none seemed to help us out of the dilemma. No

supervisor, no town clerk, no justice of the peace, and we were up a stump.

"It was now nearly night, if anything farther was done it must be done quickly, for some of us were several miles from home. Our way was through a trackless wilderness, and night would surely overtake us. Suddenly the clouds gave way, a ray of light burst upon the mind of one man, who nominated Caleb Carr for chairman; a secretary was appointed. The chairman doffed his hat into which the votes were cast, and as soon as these were counted we swore each other into office, adjourned, shook hands all around, and struck out for our homes a happy and independent people with a full-fledged government fairly inaugurated. And thus ended the first town meeting in the town of Ingham.

"Few of our readers of today can realize what we old-timers passed through to make possible the comforts of life and the beautiful homes they are now enjoying."

DANSVILLE IN 1863.

Michigan State Gazetteer.

Dansville, a post village of Ingham county, Ingham Township, on the stage route from Dexter to Mason. Has two shops for the manufacture of carriages, several stores, one church edifice, Baptist, and four organized religious societies, Methodist Protestant, Methodist Episcopal, Baptist and Universal. The north part of the township abounds in oak openings, with sandy soil, and the south part is heavily timbered, with deep soil and much clay and loam. The village has a stage connection with Howell, also with Dexter and Mason. Distance from Detroit 77 miles, 47 railroad, 30 stage. Fare \$1.30 to Dexter via Michigan Central R. R., \$1.50 thence by stage to Dansville. Three mails per week from the West and three from the East. Postmaster, Daniel L. Crossman.

TOWNSHIP OFFICERS.

Daniel S. Crossman.
 Clerk-Marshall Hawcraft.
 Treasurer---Nelson A. Whipple.

TRADES AND PROFESSIONS.

Aseltine, H.-mason.
 Atwood, Marcus M.-lawyer.
 Barnes, Chauncey-carriage maker.
 Carson, S. B.-mason.
 Castor, J. H., Rev.-Methodist.
 Cobb, Daniel J.-cabinet maker.
 Cobb, Thomas M.--cabinet maker.
 Crossman and Atwood (Daniel L. Crossman and Martin Atwood)-flour mill.
 Crossman, Daniel L.-general store and postmaster.
 Dakin, Elisha--cooper.
 Darkin, John B.-general store.
 Dean, Cyrus W.-harness maker.
 Demming, N. S. & W.-shoe makers.
 Etchells, Peter-general store.
 Fields, H. H.--cabinet maker.
 Fox, David D.-hotel.
 Francis, Joseph-shoe maker.
 Granger, H. D.-mason.
 Hann, Edgar-physician.
 Harris, B. S.--carpenter.
 Hatch, Ira-justice of the peace.
 Herald, James L.-blacksmith.
 Heald, William W.-carriage maker.
 Hendrick, S. P.-carpenter.
 ---- Hicks, A. P.-blacksmith.
 Hoffman, Mrs. J.-milliner.
 Jessup, C. & M.--saw mill.
 Keene, Joseph-carpenter.
 Lebar, L.--carriage maker.
 Miller, Loren-justice of the peace.
 Needham, William-blacksmith.

Olds, Rev.-Universalist.
 Owens, Rev.-Methodist.
 Parks, Carleton-shoemaker.
 Parks, S. V.-carriage maker.
 Rice, Egbert-general store.
 Rice, Herman-blacksmith.
 Richards, —, cabinet maker.
 Sheldon, J. O.-lawyer.
 Sherwood, Jesse-shoemaker.
 Stewart, William A.-cooper.
 Strong, L. K.-carpenter.
 Swarthout, Nathaniel—hotel.
 Tibbits, Rev.-Baptist.
 Waldo, Charles-cooper.
 Webb, T. J.-physician.
 West, John-blacksmith.
 Weston, D. J.-physician.
 Weston, D. T.-boots and shoes.
 Whipple, George G.—carriage maker.
 White, Abel-livery stable.
 Worden, Joseph-carpenter.

DANSVILLE.

In history Dansville is one of the earliest settlements in the county, Permanent home-seekers located there as early as 1836-40, and the first business establishment was a small store with a general stock, opened by Samuel Crossman about 1847. The first hotel was the present "Union Hotel," now kept by Mr Hurst. It was built in 1856-7 by David D. Fox.

A post office was established in the southern part of Ingham Township in 1846, and was first kept by John B. Lobdell. Later it was moved to Wayne's Corners, one and one-half mile south of the present village, and Henry Densmore was post master. It finally came to Dansville, where Daniel T. Weston was the first post master in 1855.

The original plat of the village was laid out May 26, 1857, by

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Heald, William W.--carriage maker.

Hendrick, **S. P.**--carpenter.

Hicks, **A. P.**—blacksmith.

Hoffman, **Mrs. J.**-milliner.

Jessup, C. & M.-saw mill.

Keene, Joseph--carpenter.

Lebar, L.-carriage maker.

Miller, Loren-justice of the peace.

Needham, William-blacksmith.

Olds, Rev.-Universalist.

Owens, Rev.-Methodist.

Parks, Carleton-shoemaker.

Parks, **S. V.**—carriage maker.

Rice, Egbert-general store.

Rice, Herman-blacksmith.

Richards, —, cabinet maker.

Sheldon, J. O.-lawyer.

Sherwood, Jesse-shoemaker.

Stewart, William A.-cooper.

Strong, L. Z.-carpenter.

Swarthout, Nathaniel—hotel.

Tibbits, Rev.—Baptist.

Waldo, Charles-cooper.

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Samuel **Crossman** and Ephraim Hillaird. D. L. **Crossman** and Dakin and Otis made additions and October 26, 1866, "Crossman's complete plat," embracing all others, was acknowledged.

March 9, 1867, the village was incorporated by act of the Legislature, and the first charter election was held May 6, 1867, at which the following officers were elected: President, Daniel L. Crossman; recorder, Marshall Hawcroft, he **resigned** and Z. Ransom was **appointed**; treasurer, L. K. Strong; **trustees**, H. L. Strong, M. V. Jessop and Joseph Keene. Churches, schools and fraternal organizations were quickly organized, and its growth only **hampered** by the lack of a railroad, but to offset this it has two stage lines run by G. I. Glynn and L. Geer, who carry trade between the village and Mason.

Many of its citizens have gone out into the world where they **hold** prominent positions and have written their names high on **honor's roll**.

DANSVILLE REMINISCENCES,

By D. L. **CROSSMAN**, 1889.

A part of a letter written in reply to an invitation to address the Masonic lodge in Dansville:

"Your kind invitation for me to address you on the evening of St. John's day, as a feature of the annual installation of the **officers** of your lodge, and I write mainly to thank you for the courtesy and for the compliment you pay me by such invitation.

"You can easily believe, when you recall that part of my history which relates to your locality, that the name of your lodge and your village is of peculiar interest to me. The poetry of age is to recall, and live over, anew, those events which happened in youth. I **have** gotten far enough along in the journey of life to appreciate the truth of this sentiment and to know now what I did not know then, viz.: that I saw my best days in the village of Dansville. That I lived my happiest years among her people and that the **memory** of the friends of those years will outlast all later **friendships**. My boyhood reaches back to the joys and struggles of the **pioneers** of that locality, and as I summon up **the memories** of

those early years and recall the names of those whose sturdy **blows** cleared **the** fields whose **tillage** you now enjoy, I realize that the greater part of those names are now on tombstones, beneath which **their** ashes rest to await the call of the angel of light in the morning.

"This brings to my mind the first grave in Dansville, that of a little girl about ten years old. The family, Robinson I think by name, had come from the State of New York with my father, and a few weeks later the child sickened and died. Her remains found a temporary resting place on the knoll, where the sawmill yard is now situated, there being no cemetery site established. A short time after the body was exhumed to find a more fitting burial spot. All the scanty population of the place being present, the body was placed in state in a log building standing on the corner now occupied by Mr. Rice's store, general curiosity being such that the coffin was opened to give all a view of the dissolution which follows interment.

"In that log building was held the first town meeting ever held in Dansville. In fact the building was put up and intended for general use as a town house and a church; but it did not long serve in any capacity as it was lost by fire, the first building burned in Dansville. It was not much of a fire compared with what you have recently suffered, but I can assure you, the loss of the only public building in the vicinity was quite a loss, even though it was constructed of logs and not at all pretentious as to size or appearance.

"It was about 1846 when I commenced going to school at the Howard school house, there being no school district yet formed in Dansville. Well do I remember the road as it was in those days. The **low** ground just south of Mr. Bullen's was not yet causewayed, and pedestrians must wade in water, sometimes quite deep, or cross the pools on logs. I usually had company over the road. A girl two or three years older than myself was generally ready, with her dinner basket in hand, to join me as I passed her home in the morning. She lives in your midst now—a worthy woman, and I have no doubt she well remembers one wet morning when a **barkless** elm log, which was the only bridge over one of those pools of water, was too slippery for her feet and she fell in. I went the-balance of the way alone that day, and when I went home at

night quite a complete wardrobe for a young lady about the size of my usual school companion, was still drying on the fence.

"A year later a careful examination of the new settlement revealed eight children of legal school age, and the Dansville district was formed. The first school meeting was held in Hale Granger's wagon shop, or what is now the McKnight lot, and the voters of the new district decided to start a school at once. True they had no house, nothing but a district and eight children; but pioneers were not held back by trifles.

"They did not wait for tax levies or contractors. They did not look for an architect with plans and specifications; but they invited every man to come to a bee and bring his axe. Two days of this combined labor and the temple of education was complete. District No. 8 was fully equipped to give instructions to its pupils and take rank with the other seven districts of the township. The seating capacity of the new edifice was ample, yet it can safely be said that the children's clothing would have lasted longer if the slabs of which the benches were made had been denuded of some of their surplus shakes and slivers. But in due time the boys' jack knives got in their work to advantage and the pupils could move about as uneasily as pupils usually do, with safety to body and limb and without unusual destruction of clothing.

"Among the first teachers employed to take charge of this model school house was a young lady of the district, whose people, just from western New York, had given her the advantages of eastern schools where discipline was somewhat in advance of the western idea. It was not strange therefore that she should find fault with some of the charcoal sketches with which I and my equally artistic seatmate, undertook to adorn the rough hewn logs of our temple, and when we persisted in our efforts to decorate the walls, she set us to shading each other's faces with the same coal pencils with which we had sought to beautify the room. I remember very well that the other pupils and the teacher seemed to enjoy the situation more than we did. This lady is still a prominent lady of your village and I presume never sees me without thinking of the ridiculous figure cut by her two pupils while undergoing this punishment.

"The same wagon shop before spoken of also served as a hall of justice for those primitive people, the jury sitting in line on the

workbench, while the justice of the peace occupied a splint chair in the corner. Law suits were not frequent, but when they did occur general interest was manifest, everybody being active on one side or the other of the case. I remember one case which involved an accounting between the parties. One item charged was the pasturing of a yoke of oxen over night, and a stuttering witness was called to prove the value of the pasturage. He was very reluctant to set the figure, but when pressed by the attorney said, 'It's w-w-w-worth two and six a week, you've g-g-got your pencil and you can f-f-f-igure it up to suit yourself.'"

JAMES SWAN, AN INGHAM PIONEER.

Now In His 85th Year, Hale and Hearty, Had Many Interesting Experiences in the Early Days of This County.

From the Ingham County News of March 18, 1909.

A remarkable old man is James Swan, of Ingham Township, four miles east of here, who claims the proud distinction of having called off the first cotillion ever danced in Michigan west of Detroit. He celebrated his 84th birthday on the 27th of last October, but his snow white hair and slightly bowed shoulders are the only signs that age has laid on him. He can dance as nimble as any youth in the country, and on a brisk cold winter day not long ago he led his son-in-law, John A. Davidson, with whom he lives, a merry 'cross country chase on foot over twelve miles of rough country on a hunting expedition. And his hand has not lost its cunning with a fiddle. You have only to hear him play Money Musk, Speed the Plow, or Durang's Hornpipe, and call off the figures of the Scotch Reel, Lady Washington, or Sicilian Circles to realize what he and his violin must have been to the pioneer settlers in a time when musicians were as scarce as are now the bears and wolves which were then the nightly visitors of the clearings.

Mr. Swan first came to Michigan from Orleans county, N. Y., his birthplace, when he was 16 years old. He came by boat to

Detroit, and took the Michigan Central to Dexter, then the most important town in this part of the State. It was the only mill and market for Ingham county settlers, and he followed the thirty-mile ox trail through the woods to his brother John's clearing, close beside the farm which he himself now owns. Stretches of heavy timber alternated here with "oak openings," rolling sandy country, from which the underbrush was burned off by yearly fires, leaving the great oaks standing with long vistas visible between them, Our York State lad compared the openings to great orchards. The Indians fired the brush each year so that they could better hunt the deer and other game which hid in the thickets. As soon as the settlers fenced the land the underbrush sprang up quickly, and there were no more "oak openings."

Mr. Swan was here only six weeks this time, but performed a notable exploit. While ploughing for his brother one day he heard an unusual commotion on the other side of a long windrow of felled trees, and seizing some stones he climbed the windrow. A dog was holding a wounded deer by the haunch and he had heard its cry of distress. He struck the deer between the eyes with a stone, felling it to the ground, and after bleeding it returned to his work, expecting the dog's owner to appear and claim the game. No one came, and after awhile he found the dog crouched on a log in the windrow watching the dead deer. His sister-in-law, Mrs. Harriet Swan, of Mason, then a girl of 17, helped him dress the deer and she collaborates the story. When they cut off the deer's head the dog seized it and disappeared, and they never saw him again.

Mr. Swan and his brother Reuben returned to the home in New York that winter. They went on foot to Dexter and from there to Ypsilanti, following the Michigan Central. Here they stayed over night, and as they had plenty of gold bought a quantity of "wild-cat" paper money for considerably below par, as the railroad company had to accept it at its face value. The next morning at five o'clock they took the train, riding in a pelting snow storm on open flat cars loaded with flour. The engine frequently uncoupled and ran ahead to clear the snow off the track, and the two young men finally got off and walked to keep from freezing. The train passed them and refused to stop, though their passage was paid to Detroit, but they caught it on a siding and arrived in De-

troit at noon. The old Commodore Perry eventually came in and they sailed to Buffalo. The trip took two days and nights and they arrived just before the great storm broke, in which nearly every vessel on the lake went down. During this storm a colored sailor swam nine miles to shore with his captain on his back, and they were the only survivors from the men on their boat.

At Buffalo the Swan boys took an Erie canal packet. After going a ways some of the crew -tapped one of the kegs of brandy in the cargo. First they knocked a hoop loose, then bored a hole in the stave under it, and after drawing out a kettle full of brandy plugged the hole and drove the hoop back. The driver left his team on the tow-path and came abroad to get his share, and while running forward to throw potatoes at his horses and keep them moving he stumbled and fell overboard. A deck hand ran to the rail with a pike pole. "Oh, Mike!" he called, "and can ye shwim?" "Sure," sputtered Mike, "an' I dunno yit." Mike was hauled abroad, dripping, shivering and half strangled. "Let me git to thot brandy," he begged, as he hovered over the cook's fire, "I want the inside to be as wet as the outside."

Eleven years passed before Mr. Swan came to Michigan to stay. In that time he made another short visit here and also sailed one season off the Atlantic coast mackerel fishing. On March 4, 1852, he was married to Miss Ann Francisco at Knowlesville, Orleans county, N. Y. He still preserves the marriage certificate, written out on a small sheet of fancy note paper and reading as follows:

Orleans County, New York, Town of Ridgeway, ss.

I do certify that on the 4th day of March, 1852, at the home of D James, in said town, James Swan and Ann Francisco were with their mutual consent lawfully joined together in matrimony, which was duly solemnized by me in the presence of Edward Bellows and Abigail Bellows, and I do further certify that I ascertained that they were of lawful age to contract the same.

Sands. Cole, J. P.

The witnesses did not sign the certificate. Mrs. Abigail Bellows, the bride's sister, is now living in Lansing as Mrs. Anson Loomis.

The harbor was full of ice when Mr. and Mrs. Swan left Buffalo one night early in May of that year on a boat which they after-

ward learned had been condemned. They had gone only seven miles when morning came and so many floats were broken from the paddle wheels that the vessel only dared stop once at Erie before running straight to Detroit. They bought their furniture in Jackson where they found brother John with an ox-cart waiting to take them to the new home in Ingham county. Most of the furniture had to be left behind, and when they had settled in the log house on John's farm and the first meal was on the table Mr. Swan sat on the churn and his wife on the bed. Soon, however, the rest of the furniture was brought from Jackson and in the fall they moved to the farm nearby, bought that summer of an insistent neighbor, where they lived together ever after until the death of Mrs. Swan. Mr. Swan still holds the old deed, dated August 2, 1853, and all his tax receipts. The tax that year on his 80 acres was \$2.11; six years later it reached the low figure of \$1.66. In 1860, on 116 acres, he was taxed \$7.25 as compared with \$53.57 for 1908.

The house was a comfortable dwelling with walls of solid loge, hewn smooth on the inside, and with the chinks "mudded up" to make them wind and weather proof. The only sawed lumber in the whole building was used in the door and window casings and these boards were sawed by hand by whip-sawyers. The floors were made of split basswood, puncheons; the same puncheons, hollowed down the middle, were laid concave side up for a roof, and others with the hollowed side down were laid over the joints and the chinks were filled with moss. A great fireplace nearly filled one end of the living room, and at one end of this swung the iron crane on which the pots/arid kettles were hung and then suspended over the fire.

One night that fall Mr. Swan was asked to bring his fiddle to a dance at Hunt's tavern, two miles south of his farm. He went and then and there he says was danced the first cotillion ever called off in Michigan west of Detroit. He formed the young people on the floor and taught them cotillions, with their various figures and movements. "(Country dances," which were never "called off," were all that had been known here, and the news went over the Country that a man over in Ingham could fiddle cotillions and call them off. After that he and his fiddle were kept busy, and he played at dances far and near for three shillings and sixpence per

couple. Many were the notable gatherings where he played, but the one which he remembers best is the great ball at Squire Linderman's tavern in Mason, two blocks north of where the court house now stands. The big ball room was crowded, and as for refreshments, "Everything's all right," said the doorkeeper, "There's a bottle in the bed room and a hog in the house. Soon there was not room for the dancers on the ball room floor, and an overflow meeting was started in the dining room of the other tavern, just south of the present court house square. Another fiddler was secured who could play country dances, and each couple, after dancing a cotillion in the big ball room, threaded their way up Main street in the dark, dodging the stumps and hollows, and sought the other tavern, where they stepped through the movements of the country dance until the arrival of more couples notified them that there was room on the floor at Squire Linderman's. The sun was shining in at the windows when the dance ended, and the dancers, many of whom had come 20 miles or more through the forest on horseback or in ox-carts, went home. Members of Mr. Swan's family played the organ, dulcimer, 'cello and other instruments, and with this orchestra he held dances at his home, besides playing all over the country for many years, but with the introduction of modern two-steps and waltzes he quit in disgust. He calls them "baby dances," and remains constant in his preference for the graceful figures and merry tunes of his younger days.

Mr. Swan tells interesting tales of hunting in the early days. While he was taking the honey from a bee tree he had cut in the forest back of his house one day a big buck came bounding past, and his dog caught the creature by the ear and dragged it down. It pushed the dog along on the ground, however, and Mr. Swan ran up with the ax to kill it before it should press the dog up against a tree or stump and impale him on its antlers. The dog lost its hold just as the man swung the ax, and the deer's great horns swept up by his face. As he struck at its head the dog dragged the deer down again, and the ax was buried so deeply in the creature's body behind the fore leg that the man could hardly pull it out. A second blow cut off one of the struggling animal's hind legs, and then Mr. Swan, forcing his knee between the deer's other limb and its body, so that it could not draw up and strike

him with the terrible sharp hind hoof, cut its throat. He was dressing it when the dog gave warning again, and looking up, he saw a drove of hogs coming at a brisk run. The settlers' hogs ran wild in the woods all summer. They were savage at any time, and these were especially so now that they had smelt the deer's blood. Seizing a **heavy** stick Mr. Swan stood ready, with the dog, to fight them **off** as long as possible, but after gazing at him a moment the leader, a huge boar, curled his tail, and with a whistling snort wheeled and trotted **off** into the woods, followed by the others. More bees came flying by while Mr. Swan was dressing the deer, and about that time Chief Johnny Okemos, a prominent character in Ingham county history, appeared on the scene, carrying a wild turkey over his shoulder, slung from his gun barrel. He "lined" the bees for Mr. Swan, and they soon found the bee tree and cut it, and there were five pails of clear honey and a deer to show **for** this day's work.

The settlers' sheep and other stock had to be yarded every night to keep them from the great timber wolves. Mr. Swan was coon hunting with a party one night when a wolf followed them in the underbrush. Their dog finally attacked the animal, and after a fierce battle the wolf broke away, leaving the dog badly lamed. One monstrous wolf, which had been killing sheep in the neighborhood, was finally poisoned and sent to a museum to be mounted. Bears were numerous but not dangerous, except to stock. Deer roamed the runways in the woods in herds like sheep, and were almost as easily killed. Wild turkeys were as numerous and as easy to shoot as sparrows are now. Mr. Swan went **cooning** alone one night in the big swamp west of his farm. Reaching Dobie's lake, eight miles away, he rolled up in the bark of a tree **and** slept there until three in the morning, when he started home, hunting on his way. On reaching home he found that a fur buyer from Detroit had been waiting over night for him, and he sold that night's catch of coon and mink skins for **\$21**.

The Indians were always friendly, and used to trade huckleberries to the settlers for provisions. Mr. Swan often visited them and fiddled for them at their favorite camping ground, on a little stream three and a **half** miles east of Mason, where the Ingham county seat had been formerly located. Some of the younger white men and women went there **one** Sunday, and

although things were not very clean around camp, they could not refuse the maple sugar which the squaws gave them as a mark of hospitality. Dozens of muskrats were roasting on twigs stuck up around the great campfire. The wigwams had pole frames covered with bark, and a big buck strode in from a hunting trip and tossing a woodchuck and other game from his shoulder threw himself down in one of these houses. As he lay there on a bed of black ash bark, covered with deer skins, in full view of the visitors, they were highly amused to see several little blind woodchuck kittens come crawling out of **his** clothes.

Mr. Swan visited Lansing once in the early history of that town, and after paying fifty cents to be ferried across Cedar river on a **raft** **Found only two or three shanties on the present site of the** Capital city. He was offered an eighty-acre timber lot, including the spot where the **Capitol** stands now, for **\$800**, but the land was too swampy to suit him. He would not lose such a chance again, however, he says, as he has noticed that cities in a new country always spring up along good water courses.

With his other activities, Mr. Swan practiced the trade of a collier. Many times he has piled all the **timber** from six or seven acres of woodland up in a great **windrow** 100 feet or more long, covered the whole with earth, and then fired it. Then he would watch it almost constantly, day and night, sometimes for six or seven weeks, covering the holes where the fire would break out, and as the burned logs shrank away, pounding down the earth over them to prevent air spaces. **When** it was thoroughly burned he would uncover the coal pit and roll out the great maple logs, as perfect as when they were first cut, and ringing like silver when they were broken up with the ax. This coal was the only fuel used by blacksmiths and tanners all over the country for years.

Mr. and Mrs. Swan went to Wyoming to visit their son **Reuben** in 1890, and the thing which impressed them most - there was the enormous herds of elk which he saw in the mountains. **He shot** three deer from the wagon while taking a **75-mile** trip to Snake River, the headquarters of **Kit** Carson in his hunting trips in that vicinity. Around Alkali creek, near by, he could see every morning a herd of 200 or more antelope and from three to **five** hundred deer when they came there to drink.

March 4, **1902**, Mr. and Mrs. Swan celebrated their golden wed-

ding. Eighty-five friends and relatives were present, and it was a memorable occasion. Nearly three years later, on Jan. 31, 1905, Mrs. Swan died. Two thrifty wild cherry trees, which stood in the door yard and were trimmed and kept for shade trees when the home was first bought, had been cut and sawed into lumber a few years before, and from the lumber three coffins had been made, for Mr. Swan, his wife, and their daughter, Mrs. Ina Davidson. On Feb. 3 Mrs. Swan was buried in her coffin, and the other two are stored away in the old home. Since then Mr. Swan has lived with his daughter, Mrs. Davidson. She is very carefully preserving several phonograph records of violin selections by him, and also has one of an old-fashioned song which he sings, "To Make Me a Beautiful Boy." He knows a number of these quaint old ballads of Revolutionary vintage, each telling a complete tale in their many verses, set to tunes that have come down from Shakespeare's time. And, in fact, although he takes a lively interest in things of the present, Mr. Swan longs for the good old days that are past, for the music, the dancing, the wholesome privations and simple pleasures of pioneer days, when the settlers would go as far to church as they would to a dance. Four miles through the woods to hear a preacher was a short walk for them, and all the country for miles around went afoot to Teal's mill pond to see a baptism. They went to Sunday school at Hawley Corners, three miles away, and while the elders and young people were engaged with the lesson, the children were outside playing marbles with wild gooseberries. Neighbors were more neighborly then. On one night in the week every family in the community would yoke up the oxen and drive to Swan's to spend the evening. Next night another family would entertain. Wealth and poverty made no social distinctions, and we are the losers, he contends, for having exchanged the simplicity of pioneer life for the conveniences and luxuries of today.

ROY W. ADAMS.

FAMOUS BIBLE GIVEN TO DANSVILLE CHURCH.

Charles H. Crossman, of New York City, Makes Gift. Was Published in 1795 When George Washington Was President—Washington Owned Bible of Same Issue.

Charles T. Crossman, of New York City, has presented the Dansville Baptist church with a Bible with a history. The book, which was published in 1795 while George Washington was President of the United States, is one of a subscription edition, and the Father of His Country was one of those who subscribed.

The family who subscribed to this volume kept it in their possession for more than a century. It was then presented to Charles H. Crossman, a son of Samuel Crossman, who was the founder of the village of Dansville. Samuel Crossman was born in 1796 at Hillsdale, N. Y., of ancestry that came to America in 1639. He located at Dansville in 1836 and the village was named after his son, Daniel H. Crossman.

The historical book was presented to the Dansville Baptists in order that the church might become its custodian. This old and valuable book will be highly prized by the society, both for its historical value and the sentiments that prompted the gift.

E. S. CLARK FAMILY.

Andrew C. Clark, now of Lansing, contributes the following relative to his family history: Elias S. Clark, the father, was born May 3, 1814, and died in Ingham Township, Ingham county, Mich., June 30, 1894. The mother, Mary A. Clark, born August 30, 1817, died August 17, 1889.

By Andrew C. Clark.

A sketch of my early recollections of the pioneer life of our dear parents' hardships and deprivations as I can recollect them.

Our parents came into Ingham county, township of Ingham, in

the year 1840 and settled upon the northwest quarter of section 6, but did not remain there long as in April of the same year they moved to section 1, northeast quarter, and there in those early pioneer days of seventy-nine years ago in a then almost unbroken forest they commenced again anew to hew out the place that was to be and afterwards was the home where a family of nine children were reared. And so by extreme industry and the most strict economy they were able to fell the forest and hew out what is today one of the finest farms of Ingham county. But they have passed out. The people of those early days had so many inconveniences, you may quite safely say they had none but inconveniences as compared with the present day. At that time there were no stoves. Can you ladies of this generation conceive how you could cook for a large family without a stove. I think I hear the answer "no." I will call your attention to some of the hardships of a pioneer life, The nearest market at that time was Ann Arbor, a distance of 45 miles through the forest by blazed trail, and over roads many of them through the low marshy ground which today we would think impossible to travel over.

The roads were so bad it required two yoke of oxen to endure the fatigue and it took five days to make the round trip, Our mothers would clean the wool and card by hand and spin the rolls into yarn and weave and knit it into stockings and socks and weave into cloth all garments for the family, and this was done by the light of a tallow candle. But at this time girls did not wear pin-head heels and toothpick-toed shoes, nor did they wear peek-a-boo dresses, but time has changed since 1840. In those pioneer days many of our mothers corded and spun the rolls and wove or had them woven into cloth and made the dresses that the girls wore, and this without the aid of a dressmaker, and in the summer time if the girls perchance were fortunate enough to have a pink calico dress and sunbonnet to match they looked just as sweet to the boys as do the girls of '1919. And for shoes, all the girls went to the shoemaker and the measure of the foot was taken and the shoe made to fit the foot, not the foot made to fit the shoe. But here we will let the girls rest and I will return to some of the pioneer inconveniences of the pioneer life of my parents. An incident that may be of interest to the present generation of a pioneer life of what we would now call poverty. I well remember

of hearing my father tell of making a visit to one of the old pioneers upon the 4th of July which was about five miles distant with an ox team and wooden shod sled through the then almost unbroken forest by the aid of blazed trees as their guide. Perhaps there are some present that may know of the family of this pioneer. He was known in those days as squire Atwood. He was the grandfather of Tip Atwood, of Tuscola county. And again I remember of hearing my father tell of one of his oxen being left out at large at night and drinking so much syrup that it acted as a cathartic to the extent that the ox was unable to get around and procure sustenance to sustain life. Father did not have either hog nor grain and setting out to see if some of his neighbors were not more fortunate than he went to a man by the name of Eben Crossman, then living as nearly all of the good people did in a log house and having a log barn told him the predicament he was in. Mr. Crossman says, "Now, Mr. Clark, I have just about as much hay in my barn as you could do up in that rope twice and come with me and I will share with you." This was about one and a half miles from home. My father took the hay upon his back and started homeward. This ox being one of his team, My father never forgot that great display of friendship and generosity. But such was the spirit of friendliness and generosity of those days. Friends, what would we of today think of our prospect for tilling the soil to procure a living for a large family with such a team as described above. In those pioneer days all stock were free commoners and people thought if their stock could live through until the 1st of April they could then procure their living, subsisting upon brakes and leeks and gleaning upon grass growing upon the low marshy land. Sometimes the cattle being thin in flesh would venture into the low marshy and springy places until being weak were unable to return and so were mired. In such case they were to be found and get neighbors with long ropes and remove them and often this was done by the light of a lantern with a tallow candle. But such were the hardships of an early pioneer's life. Again, one more hardship of those days. My father used to have to go to Milan to get all grinding done, a distance of 18 or 20 miles, and all this with an ox team. But he always performed those tasks cheerfully, looking for brighter days. And his expectations were not in vain. He was comfortably and nicely

situated long years before passing out, Now, trusting this may be of interest to some of you at least, I shall be repaid for my effort.

A. C. CLARK.

Lansing, Mich., April 13th, 1919.

Having thought perhaps a little sketch of the biography of my past life from my earliest recollections up to the present time might be of interest to the most of you, I will endeavor to narrate some of the incidents that I think will be of the most interest,

I was born upon section 6 of the township of Ingham county on February 23rd, 1843, and my people moved from there onto section 3 of the northeast quarter in the fore part of April of the same year, I being then about one and a half months old. I remained in this home continuously until I reached the age of twenty-one. This was practically a new county. There were bear, deer and fox as wild game, and I can remember the early settlers having to cover their hog pens with small logs to prevent the bear from carrying away their hogs, and of the hunters of the then wild forests belling and putting their hound dogs on their runways and the hunters standing still in hiding to shoot them as they came along. I can also well remember the inconvenience we were put to before matches were made. The pioneers were accustomed to building up their fire in the old Dutchback fireplaces and oftentimes the fire would not keep until morning and I have often had to go to the nearest neighbor with a shovel to get some coals if they were more fortunate than we were. Some people depended upon steel flint and punk in case of an emergency and sun glasses were used by some, but of course they were only successful when the sun shone brightly.

I can remember when hand sickles were used for reaping grain, but they were replaced by more modern tools before I reached the age of manhood. There were no machines for reaping grain or hay until I was about twenty years of age. One of my earliest recollections of the pioneer days was that of a man by the name of Hammond who was a shoemaker by trade who used to make all of our shoes and boots, and as my father was a blacksmith they ex-

changed with each other goods in their line. My senior brother had started to go for some work that we were promised. Cold weather was coming on and the mornings were getting pretty frosty. At that time the forest was only cleared about sixty rods north of the house which at this time stands upon the same farm. On his way my brother saw a large bear and the bear reared upon his hind legs and brother called the dog and spatted his hands until the bear turned to go away and then he took leg bail for home. I suppose if ever a boy was frightened it was he. From this point the forest was unbroken for a distance of about two miles, being guided only by marked trees for the highway. I can remember seeing corpses drawn by oxen to the school house for the funeral ceremonies as there was not a church in the land. The dwellings consisted of only one room. The first stove I ever saw was brought in by a man by the name of Webster, who came through the country peddling them. He had two of them and my father traded him a yoke of oxen for the two, keeping one and selling the other one.

Another bit of my early recollections perhaps may be of interest to you. I have a very distinct recollection of the days when a teacher of the public schools was barred from a certificate if he was unable to make a writing pen from a goose quill and the scholars were supposed to roam the pastures where the geese were kept and gather the quills after being shed by the geese. Another little incident that occurred to me at the age of about five or six was connected with the first horse my father ever owned. This horse became the dam of a little colt, and my father not having sufficient land cleared for pasture he procured pasture for her in a field adjacent to the school house where I attended school, being one mile from our home. Being anxious to exhibit my father's little colt, it at that time being a very rare specimen of that race, I invited my little comrade to go with me to see it. Of course I was leading, and upon nearing old Sake, that being her name, came to protect her young knocking me down and otherwise bruising my back to such an extent that Mr. R. W. Whipple, seeing it, came running to my rescue and carried me into his house and administered the care I needed. Mr. Whipple was then living in a log house standing where the school house now stands

and is called the Whipple school house. This occurred probably when I was at the age of five or six years.

There is just one more little incident that occurred in my childhood days which I would like to make mention of. Back in the early fifties schools were supported by rate bill as was called, i. e., those sending scholars to school paid the teacher. There being a division in the district of opinion as regard to the teacher there were two teachers hired and taught in the same house for one day only. The scholars whose parents favored the one teacher took the side that the teacher occupied, but on the second day there was but one teacher for the entire school. And well do I recollect back in my early childhood days when the forests were only partially broken of meeting large processions of Indians as we were either going or returning from school with their herds of ponies with bells on them and the squaws with their papooses strapped upon their backs, some riding the ponies and some walking, and they always had several dogs, but they were always very civil. Once they camped in front of our house, which was a natural forest at that time. And now last, but not least, in my early school days our fathers always found something for a boy to do upon the farm at the age of seven or eight years. The teacher would cut a bundle of good tough whips and keep them on hand as the boys had disputes and would fight and the teacher would give each boy a whip and tell them to go to it. This was considerable amusement for the other boys looking on to see who would become the champion. But, thank fortune, we h&e advanced from such crude practice to a more enlightened age.

BENJAMIN PERKINS AVERY, PIONEER OP INGHAM COUNTY.

Benjamin Perkins Avery, the youngest son of Nathan and Aliff (Pearson) Avery, was born in Rutland, Vt., Jan. 26, 1799. His father, Nathan Avery, was a Revolutionary soldier, and after a few years residence in Vermont after the war settled in Palmyra, N. Y., when Benjamin was about seventeen years old, living in that vicinity until 1838 when he came with his family to Michigan;

He married Feb. 4, 1831, Elizabeth (Betsey) Brewer, whom tradition gives as a descendent of Anneke Jans.

The journey to Michigan was made by canal boat from Palmyra to Buffalo, and from there to Detroit by steamboat. Elias Avery writes of those early times: "The first I remember of my father he was working land on shares and two years before coming to Michigan got enough together to get that far west and buy eighty acres of land and get home again. In the fall of 1838 we moved to Ingham county. We stopped in what is now called Meadsville.

"Old Esquire Caleb Carr lived there and kept the post office, and if one of our friends happened to write to us we could have the letter by paying twenty-five cents for it, which was the price of carrying a letter in those days.

"We secured a log school house with an old fashioned slick chimney and Dutch fireplace that smoked badly. This was about three miles from my father's land. He had just about enough money to get here with, and a large family on his hands in the woods, but father, Nathan and Christopher found wheat to thrash with flails For every eighth bushel and they pounded out black ash splints and mother and the younger children made baskets and carried them to what neighbors we could find and sold them for venison or anythiug we could eat, and we had such appetites we only knew when we had enough when there was no more on the table. Yet, by diligence we got our living and in the spring rolled up a log house, covered it with shacks and used split basswood planks for a floor, for lumber could not yet be procured. For a chamber floor elm bark was peeled and spread down so the children could be stowed away overhead. I think about an acre of ground was cleared and planted. We stayed a year and traded places with Eaton, getting only fifty-nine acres, but of better quality and more improvements."

After moving to the Eaton place the family had more room as another log house was added to the one already standing giving double the accommodations they had been having.

The deer used to come out of the woods in winter and feed on the young wheat. "One night," Henry Avery said, "father went out, and resting his rifle on the corner of the house shot one of the pretty creatures." Other game was quite plentiful. He remembered of two black bears being killed at one time.

It was so far to mill the corn was ground in the top of a stump that had been hollowed out, Indian fashion. There were no roads through the woods from one settlement to the other, nor to the school. The way was found by trees which the surveyors had blazed. The children went to school when possible and probably prized their advantages more than the present generation who have so many facilities for learning.

One of the pioneer amusements of that early day was to take a boy, put him in a deer skin, toss him up and catch him.

Benjamin Perkins Avery was a man about five feet, seven or eight inches in height, and weighed about 140 pounds; he had blue eyes and lightbrown hair and was of a quiet and affectionate nature, temperate in his habits. In his old age he sometimes smoked but finally gave up the practice entirely. He was a Democrat, and although always interested never became active in political matters. The only offices he ever held were commissioner of highways and poor commissioner.

He was a member of the M. E. church from early life. A hospitable greeting was always accorded the visitor, and the Methodist preacher often came there for a "Welcome Home." from Deacon Avery. The training and example given his family of sons had good effect, for all, in mature life, were consistent church members.

For many years he served as class leader, until stricken with shaking palsy, about twenty years before his death. The condition of his health obliged him to give up work and he deeded his farm to his son Elias, who was to take care of him for the remainder of his life.

Elias, being by nature more of a mechanic than a farmer, sold the farm and moved into the village of Dansville. After the death of his mother in 1878, and later his wife, and business reverses, he found himself unable to care for his father; so for the two years which remained for this old pioneer to live he found a home with his other sons. Rheumatism and paralysis rendered him entirely helpless, yet the old man uncomplainingly bore his lot with Christian fortitude. He died May 31, 1883, at Dansville.

His wife was a woman of much force of character. She showed her Dutch origin very plainly in her appearance and by her thrifty ways. Shewas very ambitious and even after losing her sight in

her old age would knit and sew, even when she could make nothing but holders. She had her own loom and her spinning and weaving were quite notable.

We of this generation scarcely realize the methods of our grandmother's cooking, which was done at a fireplace, the kettle hanging from a hook or crane. Beans were cooked in an iron kettle that had a tight-fitting iron cover with a handle. The beans were parboiled, then pork was added and the kettle buried, with its contents, in the coals for hours.

The first ovens, made before bricks could be procured, were built after this fashion: A pile of wood was made very compact, the size and shape of the oven desired, and then plastered over with clay. The wood was burnt out and the clay was made by the action of the fire, as strong as and serviceable as brick. When baking was to be done a fire was built in it some time before it was wanted, then when thoroughly heated the coals were taken out and bread, pies, cakes and all sorts of good things were put in, those articles requiring least baking being placed in -the front, where they could be taken out handily. When the tin ovens came into use they were considered a great invention. These set before the fireplace. and were open on the side of the fire, the heat being reflected on the other by the cover,

William Avery remembers well the first stove they ever used. The top was circular, with a griddle in the center and four other holes around it. The top revolved, allowing the cook to bring each part of the top within easy reach. This article was second-hand and after a time was replaced with a Clinton air-tight stove with an elevated oven, the door of which dropped down. It cost \$30, which was paid in chopping. The same amount was paid for a clock, a few years later, and the brass works of this timepiece are still running.

(Written 1899 by Lillian Drake Avery, of Pontiac, for a Family Record.)